Consultation on the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill

About you
Individual

1. The Bill’s general principles

1.1 Do you support the principles of the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill?
— No

1.2 Please outline your reasons for your answer to question 1.1
(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

The proposals in this Bill speak to me of the Government thinking they know better than the parent on how to raise their children. It is also implying that all parents are the same. That they are brutal in their chastising of their children with a harmless smack. Such discipline is not abuse. Even the Court of Human Rights has upheld the principle of reasonable chastisement. I am fearful that the valuable and limited resources available to the Government in searching out those who actually abuse the children in their care will be diverted away from this vital work, because that is where the Government should be focusing its attention. It has already been established too, that the majority of the Welsh public are against the introduction of a ban on smacking. Will the Government ignore such strong opposition?

1.3 Do you think there is a need for legislation to deliver what this Bill is trying to achieve?
(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

No, More legislation is not required, there is already law to protect children from abuse and this needs to be enforced. Any punishment that exceeds the norm of a parents' mild smack is
already against the law. Why burden our police and social services staff with something that is duplicating what is in place at the moment.

2 The Bill’s implementation

2.1 Do you have any comments about any potential barriers to implementing the Bill? If no, go to question 3.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

2.2 Do you think the Bill takes account of these potential barriers?

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

3 Unintended consequences

3.1 Do you think there are any unintended consequences arising from the Bill? If no, go to question 4.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

Yes. A parent disciplining their children with a mild loving smack known as the ‘reasonable chastisement defence’ will be causing them to be criminalised and the mild smack treated as assault. What happens to family life once a parent has been penalised for smacking by turning smacking into abuse? There is a risk of their losing jobs or even custody of the children. This would drain more resources from the coffers of the Government and seems to me to be making a mountain out of a molehill. Has the Government considered the impact bringing in such a Bill will have on the law against child abuse? Utter confusion I’m sure. This too would be extremely dangerous for all at-risk children. Please concentrate on this aspect of protecting children, and leave the raising and disciplining of children to their parents.

4 Financial implications

4.1 Do you have any comments on the financial implications of the Bill (as set out in Part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum)? If no, go to question 5.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)
5 Other considerations

5.1 Do you have any other points you wish to raise about this Bill?

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)